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Good Evening:

"The HOV system is the single most important element in the regional transportation network. The viability of the entire Northern Virginia transportation network is directly linked to the success of the HOV lanes."

These are not my words. These are the words of the HOV Enforcement Task Force from their report issued earlier this year. These are the words of state and county employees who have studied and understand transportation in Northern Virginia.

It is difficult to overstate how irresponsible it would be to implement an irreversible change to such a vital element of our region's transportation system without performing comprehensive studies and analysis of solutions, alternatives and commuter attitudes. Yet, the extent of the critical analysis that some have given to these proposals is merely to ponder, "It sounds like it might work". Followed by rationalizations of "We have to do something", "What do we have to lose" and "It can't be any worse." Well it can be worse and what is most telling about these proposals is what has not been addressed. They do not demonstrate how this project will meet its goals or provide any evidence that there is a likelihood of meeting the goal of improving transportation in our region.

- ❑ Where are the traffic and travel time projections for both the HOT Lanes and General Purpose Lanes? Without these projections, it is impossible to determine:
  - How Clark can claim that HOT will improve travel times;
  - the effect of adding the proposed new entry and exit points;
  - the effect of tolling 24/7;
  - the impact to the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge bottleneck;
  - Whether their estimated toll rates are valid; OR
  - Whether toll revenue will be sufficient to attract bondholders?
- ❑ What about the impact of commuter attitudes toward tolls or the impacts of HOT to existing mass transportation participants?
  - There is no doubt that some carpoolers and other mass transportation riders will decide to pay the toll rather than deal with the inconveniences of their current transportation option, which will add additional single rider vehicles to the road.
- ❑ Furthermore, neither of these proposals sufficiently addresses:
  - the impact to traffic during construction;
  - how the bold promises of ready law enforcement and other first responders will be met; OR
  - the number of injuries, deaths or amount of property damage that will occur as a result of the design exceptions for lane widths and shoulders.

Most of us would agree that the answer to the region's transportation issues lies in increasing the use of mass transportation including rail, bus and carpools, thus reducing the number of single rider vehicles. However, people will only do what you incent them to do and the only incentive that HOT provides is to encourage more single rider vehicles. Single rider vehicles are the problem, not the solution. In fact, if you're serious about solving the region's transportation issues, you have many other options including; working with businesses to promote telework, eliminating the hybrid exemption, instituting HOV-4 or installing toll booths on the General Purpose Lanes to encourage mass transportation.

Doing the right thing is usually the hardest thing to do. It would be easy to implement HOT – there is no financial risk and very little political risk. Yet, it is still the wrong answer for Northern Virginia. If this project goes forward and turns out to be the disaster that I believe it will – will you be able to say that you did the right thing for the right reasons?

I am strongly opposed to any proposal that would convert HOV lanes to HOT.

Thank you.